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Please amend Claim 23 as follows:

23) The device of claim 1 wherein the sealing means is one or more structures formed on a surface of the device from a molded thermoplastic or thermoplastic elastomer.

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed November 20, 2002.

The extension of time necessary in this case has been filed with this response.

Claim 2 and has been amended to overcome the objection of paragraph 1.

Claim 23 has been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-4,9, 10,13-17, 21-24 and 26 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Pearl et al (US 5,824,217). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Pearl as discussed in the Background to the invention relates to a different invention. It relates to a design that creates self contained, sealed modules that are then assembled together into a finished device. This device doesn't use the traditional system of plates, alignment rods and compression along with an adhesive such as epoxy or urethane to hold and seal the various layers together. Rather it forms a gasket free, adhesive free device formed by making sealed subassemblies that are then sealed together by insert molding. As mentioned in the background, Pearl is an advancement in the art in that it uses an entirely new system of insert molding to form a device but in doing so it requires the use of new holders and connection equipment which are a capital expense.

In contrast, the present invention works on the old system design and/or the design of Pearl (if a separate gasket formed on a layer is needed for some purpose) and form in place a gasket where desired to a single layer of membrane, of screen or to a filter component such as an outlet port of a cartridge housing. By forming the gasket in place one creates an integral

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seal where needed that does not fall off, does not create places for microbes to hide and grow and does not create extractables.

Pearl does not appear to mention the use or formation of gaskets anywhere in its text. Rather it uses an insert molding technique to create a molded sealed assembly. It quite unlike the present invention which requires the formation of a gasket formed in place on the desired layer in the desired position. It may be overmolded to form a device similar to Pearl or used in a more traditional plate type of device. As this is neither taught nor suggested by Pearl, Pearl is believed not to be an anticipatory reference.

Claims 1-4,10,13, 14, 116-19 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Ondrick (US 5,445,737). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Ondick shows a multiple layered diffusion dialysis device for the cleaning of plating acids. It is formed of several layers of rectangular gasket material formed from sheets of material (80, 82,84), a membrane sheet a second set of rectangular gasket material formed from sheets of material (90, 92,94), and a separate open network member (86) disposed within the open chamber formed by the gaskets on each side of the membrane. The sheets of gasket material have holes formed in their periphery to form the various ports. It fails to teach or suggest the use of a molded in place gasket on the membrane or on a screen a sis currently claimed and therefore is not an anticipatory reference.

Claims 5-8, 9, 11, 12, 15 and 25 have been rejected under 25 USC 103(a) over Ondrick. Applicants disagree.

Ondick is as stated above. It also incorporates cut away sections to form feed channels to the interior of the membrane and separate screen (86). It teaches and suggests to one of ordinary skill in the art that the gasket sheets are of uniform height, except where the cutout (212) is formed. Here is suggests removing material to form the channel rather than adding material to form a gasket as in the present invention.

There is no teaching or suggestion that one could or would add a molded in place gasket to the already existing preformed gasket sheet. There is no need to do so. The gasket as Ondick describes it is already there by the existence of those layers. Moreover the screen like material is not part of the outer edge of the gasket as it can be in the present invention. Rather it simply sits loosely in the chamber formed by the gasket layers. This is entirely different from the present invention which allows one to select a material suitable for the

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screens and membranes and to add the necessary gaskets directly to them as needed. This eliminates the multiple gasket layers of Ondick and allows one to select the materials best suited for its purpose and simply assembling them together in the desired arrangement.

Attached hereto is a marked up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made".

The above amendment is believed to respond fully and completely to all issues raised in the office action and place the claims in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the Attorney of record at the phone number below if any further issues need to be addressed before allowance of the claims.

Respectfully Submitted,



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May 20, 2003
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On May 20, 2003



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USSN 09/937,114
Andrew Bartlett et al
September 20, 2001
Sealing Device For Filtration Devices
Atty #: MCA-460

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VERSION MARKED TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In The Claims:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1). (Amended) A filtration device comprising one or more filter layers and one or more openings, said openings having one or more sealing means for establishing a liquid tight seal around each of the one or more openings, said means being molded in place and formed of an elastomeric material selected from the group consisting of thermoplastics, thermoplastic elastomers, thermoset elastomers and rubber, natural and synthetic.

Claim 2 has been amended as follows:

2) A feed screen for a filter device comprising a screen containing a plurality of openings, said screen having a relatively uniform thickness and a series of two or more ports along at least one of its peripheral edges, at least one of said ports having a molded in place gasket which has a thickness greater than that of the screen and said thickness of said gasket extends from at least one side of said screen.

Claim 23 has been amended as follows:

23) The device of claim 1 wherein the sealing means is one or more structures formed on a surface of the device from a molded thermoplastic or thermoplastic elastomer.